

The Denunciation of Religious Collusion with Colonization in Devil on the Cross & Matigari

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INTRODUCTION

In *Devil on the Cross* as well as in *Matigari*, Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o draws upon biblical elements to depict the prevailing situations in Kenya during the colonial and postcolonial periods. Even though these novels were first written in Gikuyu, they are full of images excerpted from the Bible. To analyse them, it is noteworthy that Ngũgĩ attended a missionary school, and was baptized James Ngũgĩ. However, being aware of the sufferings of his countrymen and the roles played by the missionaries in colonialism, he virulently attacks their unchristian practices by which the masses have been brainwashed. He asserts: 'I am not a man of the Church. I am not even a Christian' (Ngũgĩ, *Homecoming* 31). This declaration sheds light on one aspect of the use of the biblical language in the two novels under study: *Devil on the Cross* and *Matigari*.

To deal with the subject of religious collusion with colonialism, we will utilize the Marxist and postcolonial approaches. These approaches will help in the analyses of diverse notions. The Marxist literary theory is an essential guideline to examine Ngũgĩ's opposition to the different forces that hamper the liberation and prosperity of Kenyan people. It represents a central instrument of struggle in both novels. This study demonstrates that Ngũgĩ's artistic genius enables him to mix Gikuyu and the Marxist philosophical doctrine with biblical elements to convey his messages. He is prominent for his commitment to fight against all the shackles that hinder the true emancipation of Kenyan people. In almost all his literary works, his determination for social justice is very manifest. While considering the place of African writers in the socio-political problems of the continent, one recognizes a well-known figure named Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o. Today, studying *Devil on the Cross* and *Matigari* is another way to rediscover the value of a man

who perpetually supports the masses in the struggle for a full and true liberation. Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o has 'used the pen in the service of the truth' (Ngũgĩ, *Barrel of a Pen* 69). At this point, it is necessary to define some key terms: the biblical language and the notion of aesthetics.

The biblical language refers to the diverse elements, signs, symbols, parables, events, and stories which are extracted from the Bible. It is figuratively used in different ways in the two novels studied in this chapter. The different items from the Bible bear diverse meanings. Some of them are mainly implicit allusions whereas others are incorporated accurately. The notion of aesthetics alludes to the way of using a language in an artistic manner to convey messages. According to *The Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary*, aesthetics is concerned with beauty in the artistic style. In the field of literature, the style of a writer is fused with the aesthetic aspects that are also linked to the content. We develop our corpus in the light of these definitions.

One of the key facts during colonization was the involvement of missionaries in the process of domination in Africa. The administrators worked closely with the missionaries, whose main mission was to proclaim the Gospel, to conquer, dominate, and exploit. This is succinctly captured by Leonard Kibera in these terms: 'Christianity often came to Africa as a way of introducing the more ruthless realities of imperialism' (Kibera 84–5). Through this assertion, Kibera highlights that the colonial enterprise used the missionaries as a smoke screen to better reach its goals; the religion of the missionaries was taken as an ideological apparatus for the sake of the colonizers. No matter how strong their will to ever spread the Gospel throughout the world, some of the missionaries undoubtedly participated in the colonizing projects. This fact can be particularly perceived in the following biblical elements: the Beatitudes, often called the Sermon on the Mount, and the Commandments.

THE SERMON ON THE MOUNT (BEATITUDES) & THE COMMANDMENTS

To succeed in their objective, the colonizers found methods through which they could easily alienate the natives. A clear example was the brainwashing system of the missionaries. It was through teachings that they tried to infuse a certain degree of alienation in the minds of the African people. Indeed, the role played by missionaries was all the more profitable to colonizers as they had recourse to the Church when the

situations became difficult. Some priests represented determinant actors on whom the colonial administrators could rely to reinforce their policies of exploitation. In both novels, the so-called 'men of God' manipulate workers and peasants by trying to convince them that it is beneficial for them to be obedient to the white civil servants. The Beatitudes or Sermon on the Mount and the Commandments are subverted in these novels. In the Holy Scriptures, the Beatitudes are often called the Sermon on the Mount. Christ in his early mission gathered the disciples on the mount and taught them tenets that are related to their earthly and heavenly lives. He encouraged them to practise good deeds and enhanced their faith given the sufferings they would face while announcing the Gospel. Thus, in the Gospel of Matthew 5: 1–12 it is written:

Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven
 Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted
 Blessed are the gentle, for they shall inherit the earth
 Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they
 shall be satisfied
 Blessed are the merciful, for they shall receive mercy
 Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God
 Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called sons of God
 Blessed are those who have been persecuted for the sake of righteousness,
 For theirs is the kingdom of heaven
 Blessed are you when people insult you and persecute you and falsely say
 All kinds of evil against you because of Me
 Rejoice and be glad, for your reward in heaven is great; for in the
 Same way they persecuted the prophets who were before you
 (*Bible of Jerusalem*, Matthew 5: 1–12)

In *Matigari*, the Beatitudes are subverted to strengthen the power of the colonizers. To get the colonized to give up any form of revolt, the priests use these biblical words. Instead of reminding the political authorities that the social conditions of this class of marginalized people should be improved, they exert their priesthood in the interest of 'those- who- reap-where- they- never- sow' (Ngũgĩ, *Matigari* 75).

This expression is indicative of the high degree of exploitation that the people suffer. It confirms that the masses sow with their hands, labour for long periods of harsh work, while the colonizers come to steal all the produce they obtain to ensure their survival. Nothing remains but fear, cries, and grief, for they are taught that such situations are legitimate. They are also taught to accept such situations as their salvation depends on those situations. Within this context, Tshibola Bibiane Kallengayi observes that:

The missionary takes his Bible, goes through pages and tells them that as God's people being in quest for eternal salvation, they must accept all the difficult situations for, those who strengthen their faith on the Gospel. Thus, does he contribute, in favour of the colonizer, to silence the minds, suppress the revolts and maintain the Black in a perfect submissive way. (Kallengayi 23)

Essentially, Kallengayi recognizes the conspiracy of some missionaries with the colonizer. She adds that for the African writer, the missionary appears as an efficient weapon serving the colonizer to better subjugate the black people. It is through this analysis that the use of these biblical tenets enables Ngũgĩ to denounce the abusive and unfaithful discourses of the missionaries. In contrast, given as basic guidelines to believers, the Commandments and the Beatitudes are at the core of religious practices. However, the so-called churchmen hide the truth to serve the colonizers.

In *Devil on the Cross*, the narrator shows expressively the psychological indoctrination that the natives undergo. The onerous fate of black people is heightened by a mental alienation. The religious men interpret the Holy Scriptures in favour of the dominators and to the detriment of the downtrodden. For instance, to keep them in a pacific and submissive acceptance of their difficult social conditions, they call for biblical sermons, as depicted in the novel:

Every Sunday the workers will be read sermons that will instruct them that the system of milking human sweat, human blood and human brains, the system of robbery of human labour power and human skill – is ordained by God, and that has something to do with the eventual salvation of their soul. It is written in the Holy Scriptures: Blessed are they that mourn, for they shall be comforted. Blessed are they that hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they will be filled. Blessed are they that visit an ill man, for they shall see God. Blessed are they that daily observe the three Commandments: 'Thou shall not lie, Thou shall not steal, Thou shall not covet other people's property, for they shall inherit wealth in Heaven'. (188)

Ngũgĩ satirizes the missionaries to underscore their collusions with the exploiters. The Beatitudes reflect in *Devil on the Cross* the sufferings of the natives. The striking aspect of the people's sufferings manifests in the deprivation of the people's natural rights and the reduction to souls that live in perpetual submission waiting to rejoice in Heaven, as taught by the missionaries. In this connection, the South African activist, Steve Biko asserts that 'the most potent weapon in the hand of the oppressor is the mind of the oppressed' (Biko 92).

In the light of the above, Biko, like Ngũgĩ, has examined the ways that psychological force served to better enforce domination on colonized people. Biko's thought has highlighted our understanding of the Kenyan writer's criticism of missionary teachings. It sustains the argument that the Ten Commandments in *Devil on the Cross* or the Beatitudes in *Matigari* are used as instruments to suppress all attempts of resistance and ensure the imperialists' supremacy. Although Biko alluded to the apartheid system, it is also an expression of all forms of oppression.

Relatedly, Frantz Fanon's *Black Skin, White Masks* deals with the phenomenon of indoctrination during the colonial era. The book portrays the relation between colonialism and alienation. Fanon posits that psychological domination was the first step towards a total control of the masses. In his views, Fanon maintains that the consolidation of political power passed through a process of alienation; and Potholm illustrates that 'Fanon's work demonstrates that even more terrible than the colonization of a country is the colonization of the mind' (Polthom 4). At this point, the Commandments in *Matigari* give evidence that the 'churchmen' hypocritically hide the truth from those who claim to incarnate 'Truth and Justice'.

Similarly to the Beatitudes quoted above, the Commandments in *Matigari* are used to uphold the exploiting system. Being aware of the ongoing injustice which leads workers and peasants to rebellious acts, the minister brings along the priest so that he reads the Commandments. According to him, it is necessary to become sensitized to obtain insight concerning the masses' attempt at uprising. In order better to grasp the essence of this point, an explanation from the Bible is necessary. Given as guidelines to believers, the Commandments are at the core of religious practices. They refer to the Law of God which Moses received, and was ordained to teach the Hebrews respect and obedience in their daily lives, Exodus 20: 1-17.

Furthermore, in *Matigari* the brainwashing strategy reaches a very high level to an extent that the minister declares that in Kenya, 'the law works under Christian democracy' (129). That expression is quite explicit, as it demonstrates that religious and political authorities are closely linked. The conspiracy between them allows that some religious men are in the service of the secular power. By way of illustration, the minister addresses the villagers as follows:

I shall now call upon the preacher to read us the Ten Commandments.
I want you to listen very attentively to God's Commandments:
Thou shall have no other gods before me

Thou shall not make unto thee any graven image
 Thou shall not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain
 Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy. Six days thou shall labour;
 But the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God. In it, thou shall
 not do any work.
 Honour thy father, thy mother thy days may be long
 Thou shall not kill.
 Thou shall not commit adultery.
 Thou shall not steal.
 Thou shall not bear false witness against thy neighbour's things;
 Thou shall not covet thy neighbour's wife, nor his cows nor anything
 that is thy neighbour's. (121)

The reading of these commandments is a means to silence the masses. It indicates that the Minister for Truth and Justice strives to keep the people from whom they get enriched in total ignorance of their difficult living conditions. It is at this point that the Commandments have similarities with the Beatitudes mentioned previously. Both are elements through which Ngũgĩ reveals the disgraceful facts about the missionaries. Besides, these elements are seen as embodying a critical and satirical analysis of the Christian missionaries: 'Ngũgĩ deplores Christianity as a means of conditioning people into an acceptance of colonial and neo-colonial exploitation. As he comes increasingly to deplore it, biblical allusions are employed with an increasingly ironic edge' (Cook and Okenimkpe 123).

Prominently, the use of biblical elements becomes in one way a medium for Ngũgĩ to attack the missionaries. It underscores anew his aim as a writer, which is to plead and be the spokesman of the marginalized people.

In another way, the biblical allegories are combined with Marxist ideology. At the time Ngũgĩ wrote these two novels, he was deeply influenced by Marxists. Marx's point of view has implications for different aspects of life, as highlighted below:

Religious distress is at the time the Expression of real distress and the protest against real distress. Religion is the sigh of the oppressed creature, the heart of the heartless world, just as it is the spirit of a spiritless situation. It is the opium of the people. (Marx and Engels 38)

In fact, thinkers protest against the way some people use religion to satisfy their own interests rather than working for the well-being of the lower classes. In his contact with Christianity, Ngũgĩ has analysed the role played by some 'churchmen' in the different projects of exploiters. This is what he describes in his prison diary:

Obedience of the oppressed to the oppressor; peace and harmony between the exploited and the exploiter; the slave to love his master and pray that God grant that the master may long reign over us: these were the ultimate aesthetic goals of colonial culture carefully nurtured by nailed boots, police truncheons and military bayonets and by the carrot of a personal heaven for a select few. The end was to school Kenyans in the aesthetic of submission and blind obedience to authority reflected in that Christian refrain, Trust and Obey:

Trust and Obey
For there is no other way
To be happy in Jesus
But Trust and Obey. (Ngũgĩ, *Detained* 42)

Ngũgĩ notes further that he uses his pen through art to write about the enslaving teachings of the missionaries who implemented schools and churches as a way of designing subjugation. In fact, the use of the Beatitudes and the Commandments is to give the reader a clear view of the starting point of oppression. Almost all of African writers' works have dealt with the effects of indoctrination on the masses. But, Ngũgĩ does not merely describe this phenomenon. His Marxist view is that the victims must struggle.

The Sermon on the Mount or Beatitudes and the Commandments are depicted in *Devil on the Cross* and *Matigari* as psychological tools which the colonizers and the neo-colonialists, through the aid of some missionaries, instil in the minds of the natives to exploit them more intensively. This fact is what Louis Althusser calls an 'ideological apparatus'. According to him, some institutions function by ideology in relation to society. For him, the powerful forces try to convince the subjects that the actions of the dominators are quite right or even natural. Thus, the subjects are willingly submitted to exploitation. Althusser asserts that the masses consent or obey because of the psychological persuasion that alienates them. In other words, ideology represents a seminal tool through which human beings become assimilated and recognize themselves as subjects. Accordingly, they live in conformity with the rules established by a given institution.

In the same perspective, the process of disclosing the diverse strategies of the exploiters is what our second section proposes to examine through the biblical allegory of temptation.

TEMPTATION

In Kenya, as well as in many African countries, colonization had colluded with a so-called ‘civilizing mission’. When the different European powers came, they leaned on some institutions, prominent among which was the Church. Their interests lay in a strong need to exploit the resources of the discovered lands. That was the case in Kenya where the inhabitants were victims of the seizure of lands by the British authorities. In this regard, Ngũgĩ observes that ‘In Kenya, while European settlers robbed people of their land and the product of their sweat, the missionary robbed people of their soul’ (Ngũgĩ, *Homecoming* 32).

This assertion emphasizes the double exploitation suffered by Kenyan people. On the one hand, all the properties that belonged to them were taken by force. On the other, missionaries strove to strip them of their customs and traditions, the ‘soul’ of their cultures.

In *Devil on the Cross*, two opposite forces struggle: Good and Evil. The latter is strongly armed to capture its prey. Here, Ngũgĩ’s determination to subvert and unveil the evil deeds of the ‘Devil’s Angels’ is visible. A case in point here is the class of the Rich Old Man from Ngorika who has betrayed Wariinga and Boss Kihara trying by all means to gain the confidence of Kareendi with convincing words:

Please Kareendi, little fruit of my heart, listen to me carefully so that I will tell you beautiful things. I will rent a house for you on Furaha Leo Estate, or in the centre, Kenyatta Avenue, or any other part of the city. Choose any flat or house you like. I will have the place decorated with furniture, carpets, mattresses, and curtains from Paris, London, Berlin, Rome, New York, Tokyo, Stockholm or Hong Kong (...) Kareendi, my little fruit, my little orange, flower of my heart, come to me and say bye-bye to poverty. (22)

It is as if the exploiters adopt the discourse of the missionaries whom Ngũgĩ reminds us, ‘the tongue of the white man was coating with sugar, his humility was touching’ (Ngũgĩ, *Homecoming* 10). These expressions give evidence to the allegorical name attributed to them, the ‘Devils Angels’. This new class of civil servants, whose economic position allows them to gain more privileges, is what temptation symbolizes. In their appearances and speeches, they seem to behave rightly whereas their actions are rooted in an incessant will to steal people’s properties. In fact, this biblical word can be better understood if its source in the Bible is revisited.

Temptation is drawn upon the Gospel of Matthew. It stands for the fact that when Jesus went to the Mount fasting, the devil tried to mislead him. As taught in Matthew, the temptation of Christ is an important step of his mission. In the same way that Christ was tempted by the devil, Ngũgĩ establishes an analogy to evince the persisting tactics of the exploiters. He draws a parallel between the devil as an invisible force and the 'immaculate' beings or 'devil's Angels' who eagerly spend their times exploiting the population.

In *Devil on the Cross*, the Voice narrates the diverse strategies used by the exploiters to convince people like Wariinga. In this novel, a dialogue is established to clearly portray the story of temptation. It sheds light on the way exploitation operates. The Voice epitomizes the powerful exploiters. The language of the Voice has a profound ring:

Come. Come. Follow me, and I'll take you up into the big Illmorog mountains, and I'll show you all the glories of the world (...) I'll give them all to you (...) Yes, if you kneel down before me and sing my praises (...) Oppressor. Exploiter. Liar. Grabber. I am worshipped by those who love to dispose of goods that have been produced by others. Give me your soul, and I will guard it for you. (192)

In the analysis of temptation in *Devil on the Cross*, the language used, through the character of the Voice, is similar to that in Matthew 4:1–12:

Then Jesus was led by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil. And after He had fasted forty days and forty nights, He then became hungry. And the tempter came and said to him: 'the devil took him to a very High mountain and showed Him all the kingdoms of the world and their Glory and said to him 'All these things I will give you, if you fall down and worship me'. (194)

In comparison with the spirit we can say that the aim of the Voice is to show Wariinga that it is a powerful force imbued with things that can be useful to her. Knowing her social status as a poor girl who is looking for better living conditions, the spirit, which epitomized the new bourgeoisie, uses its materialism to prosper. This wealthy new class uses the advantage of its position to seduce the innocent girls. The latter become properties exposed to sexual abuse by men. Being deprived of income in a society where gender identity is analysed through a binary relation – possessor/possessed, dominator/dominated, master/property, and others – women do not escape the temptation of businessmen. The special emphasis of this allegory is also to be perceived in Ngũgĩ's denunciation of the capitalist system.

In fact, in a society which is becoming more and more capitalist, poor people are sold as properties to wealthy men from the comprador class. Cook and Okenimkpe observe that:

Wariinga plays the part of Christ in her temptation by the Devil, explicitly in her cry of 'Get behind me, Satan'. She takes over Christ's role as a man and eliminates any suggestion of godhead in doing so. But she thereby identifies herself without arrogance since this is a visionary sequence with Christ's moral position. (...) Wariinga totally rejects the materialistic worldly-wisdom of Satan's proposals as adamantly as does Christ in the New Testament. It is the wealthy and socially complacent who minister to the Devil as they take him from the cross. (124)

At this point, temptation relates the attitudes of the middle class towards the female gender. For instance, because of the lifestyle of the Rich Old Man who incarnates the newly rich man, Wariinga's uncle decides to offer her as a sexual prize in exchange for a bank loan and a piece of land to buy. Innocently the girl is fascinated, and consequently becomes pregnant by the man of Ngorika.

As a matter of fact, temptation is used figuratively to describe the constant actions of the 'devil's angels' to ensnare ingenious people. In this respect, Cook and Okenimkpe add:

It is true that this 'spirit eventually uses these revelations' to try and ensnare Wariinga into submission to worldly wisdom. But Wariinga has her work cut out to convince herself later that this was the father of lies speaking and not a prophetic spokesman for the humanist ideal. (125).

Tempters are especially identified with the diverse men whose acts are, by and large, embodied in the projects of the devil. Their plan involves filling their pockets and going in search of young girls, given that such wealth offers opportunities for sex. Temptation is made explicit as follows:

Let me show you palaces hedged round with flowers of all different colours of the rainbow, take you on a tour of golf courses carpets with green, guide you to night clubs where a ride in a car that moves smoothly over tarmac highways with the grace of young sliding across the perfumed body of a woman. All those wonders will belong to you. (Ngũgĩ, *Devil on the Cross* 192)

These words are illustrative of the way the class of tempters tries to persuade girls that they will get all they need once they accept to collaborate. They make clear the illusionary possessions in the hands of the local businessman that stress their continuous quest for satisfactory sex.

Furthermore, the class of Boss Kihara and that of Kimeendeeri use praise words, and make promises for the purpose of obtaining what they want from girls who belong to the downtrodden class. The recurrence of the verb 'will' demonstrates the power of temptation. What favours the tempters are the unfortunate situations of the masses. The tempters see their material properties as glorious things which help them reach their goals.

Another biblical element: Resurrection focuses on the survival of the exploiters.

RESURRECTION

To underscore the way neo-colonialism has been instituted, the author emphasizes the functioning of this system. In a state which has just been liberated from British occupation, a new destructive power emerges. The 'local watchdogs' are eager to act as foreign handmaidens. As a result, the masses become more and more unfortunate because men resurrected to impose starvation on them. The narrative voice avers:

And there and then the people crucified the Devil on the Cross, and they went away singing songs of victory. After three days, there came others dressed in suits and ties, who, keeping close to the wall of darkness, lift the Devil down from the Cross. And they knelt before him, and they prayed to him in loud voices, beseeching him to give them a portion of his robes of cunning. (13)

The allegorical meaning of the Resurrection can be better perceived by focalizing on its relation with the Crucifixion. However, a clarification is essential for the sense in Ngũgĩ's novel. Resurrection is one of the most meaningful aspects of the Christian doctrine: that Jesus was resurrected to save mankind from damnation.

In the Gospel of Luke, it is held that 'the Christ would suffer and rise again from the dead the third day and that repentance and forgiveness would be proclaimed in His name to all nations, beginning from Jerusalem' (Luke 24: 46–7). In its reinterpretation, it embodies a negative sign. It is ironically depicted. No matter how the 'disciples of Satan' have been sentenced to death by the guerrilla fighters during the Emergency, they reincarnated as real forces of evil. Such a reincarnation makes them recover the skills of their instructors.

Through resurrection, the author of *Devil on the Cross* and *Matigari* retraces the long process of European education that many of the new leaders of the independent states have been prepared to perpetuate. A

transmission of competences in the service of exploitation has operated in the new nations. It has been 'a process of conditioning, subjugating or conquering the mind and, therefore of altering the personality, of which colonial education was guilty' (Cook and Okenimkpe 17).

These words deeply analyse the way neo-colonialism was settled despite the strong resistance of patriots. In other words, resurrection stresses particularly a deconstruction to satirize the comprador class who has chosen to betray Kenyan people by allying with European dominators. It suggests that the presence of colonialism is still felt through neo-colonialism. With this biblical allegory, Ngũgĩ keeps on dealing with the malaise of the new independent states of Africa as a whole. According to him, the effects of colonialism are transferred in the power of leaders who compete to degrade the menial possessions of their own communities. In fact, resurrection is essentially revealing of Ngũgĩ's disillusionment with the new leaders.

That aspect has been also thoroughly explained by James Ogude, who states: 'In the grotesque image of the Devil that appears to Wariinga, Ngũgĩ seems to suggest a linear and continuing relationship between the Devil (...) and the black elite (comprador bourgeoisie) that takes over at independence' (Ogude 48). According to this critic, the Devil which Ngũgĩ describes in *Devil on the Cross* is suggestively a designation of the unchanging nature of independence compared to the times of European domination. He underlines that the relationships between the white master and the native intellectual have been based on a will on both sides to maintain powerful exploitation of the masses. The aesthetic element of this biblical allegory can be seen as a technique to attract the reader about the connection between the two systems of exploitation: colonialism and neo-colonialism. As Ngara states: 'The aesthetic appeal may be regarded as determining the writer's power of persuasion' (Ngara 23).

Through the allegorical use of this biblical element, the committed Kenyan writer finds it appropriate to explain the situations of the new sovereign countries. What is at stake is to speak for the voiceless people through the pen. As he asserts:

Our pen should be used to increase the anxieties of all oppressive regimes. At the very least, the pen should be used 'to murder their sleep' by constantly reminding them of their crimes against the people and making them know that they are being seen. The pen may not be mightier than the sword, but used in the service of truth it can be a mighty force. (Ngũgĩ, *Homecoming* 69)

Through this assertion, Ngũgĩ recognizes that it is of paramount importance that the writer plays a key role in society. The fact of comparing the pen to a sword is to meditate beyond the simple words in order to comprehend the message of the writer. This proves that in the allegorical use of the word resurrection, it is clear that what the writer conveys is the close link that exists between colonialism and neo-colonialism:

It is now the Devil, ruthless genius of the cash nexus, who in a vision is crucified by workers and peasants, and is then taken from the cross towards resurrection by the rich and the powerful (immaculately dressed) who lives by Satan's creed and prospers as he prospers. (*Devil on the Cross* 123).

The above highlights the figurative nature of the word resurrection. In this analysis, it is shown that the struggle led by workers and peasants which consequently brought about political independence, has not purified the country of evil. A case in point is that the resurrected people have acquired the strength of the master: the Devil. What characterizes them are narcotic elements which enable them to be as oppressive as or even more oppressive than their predecessors. As depicted in Wariinga's nightmare:

She would see the Devil, with skin as white as that of a fat European she once saw near the Rift Valley Sports Club, (...) and after three days, when he was in the throes of death, he would be taken from the Cross by black people in suits and ties, and, thus restored to life, he would mock Wariinga. (13)

While warrior heroes were fighting the enemies in the battlefields, some Kenyan agents on the other side were preparing to considerably manage the country by imitating the former dominators. Accordingly, after the struggles for independence, Kenya continues to suffer mismanagement from a class of people who secretly are tied to the ancient rulers. Similarly, Baydallaye Kane notes that: 'The system ensures its own reproduction and perpetuates its exploitive and oppressive traditions. In *Devil on the Cross*, this idea is illustrated by the metaphor of the resurrection of the devil as it appears in the nightmare which recurrently troubles Wariinga's sleep' (Kane 224).

Ngũgĩ demonstrates that colonialism and neo-colonialism are only separate in terms of time, but the realities remain the same. Both are manifestly characterized by an obsessive oppression, and above all, the exploitation of the masses' products. The harmful actions of the

former dominators are still evident in the post-independent state led by rulers who are getting more and more authoritarian. As a result, the dreams of the people are illusions that end in disenchantment given that nothing has changed. In spite of the fact that they have been longing for a better future, the ruled see their hopes betrayed. Then, similarly to their predecessors, the new managers have succeeded in setting up strong 'state apparatuses' to protect their interests. By doing so, they are richer and richer while their people are poorer and poorer.

Indeed, through the metaphor of the resurrection of the devil, the writer shows that colonialism as well as neo-colonialism reflect the aims of a minority to exploit a majority. The comprador class loots the wealth of the community, and strengthens its power of domination in all the sectors. These agents intensify their strategies to strictly preserve what they have accumulated. It is for this purpose that the police, and the court, etc, intervene to sustain them.

Ogude insists on the power of new managers to acquire the evil deeds of the former oppressors, and consequently progress in their projects of destroying the people's lives. It seems that they are even more oppressive because, as members of the community, they know well the strategies to adopt. According to Ogude: 'Ngũgĩ further suggests that the desire of the comprador class which rescues the Devil, thereby introducing a new form of colonialism is to inherit the Devil's worst qualities' (Ogude 62–3). The main focus of resurrection remains the way neo-colonialism has been set up. It refers to the persisting facts in a state which is considered to be independent, sovereign, and freed from colonial domination. Worse, the country witnesses a re-establishment of the projects of the former administrators. In fact, beyond its ironic use, resurrection is aesthetically satirical. It suggests that relationships between the ancient colonial agents are transformed in other ways that are more efficient for the organization of a new system. As Reddy declares: 'what follows (the independence) is the transformation of colonialism into a neo-colonialism – only a change of actors at the centre stage, black zombies in place of white master. But the flute player and the tune-caller remain the same' (Reddy 81).

This implies the substitution of colonialism with neo-colonialism that resurrection allegorized in *Devil on the Cross*. Prominently, Ngũgĩ does not only denounce the evil deeds of colonizers. He also draws the attention to leaders concerning their alliances with foreigners.

CONCLUSION

The points that have been explored in the two novels by Ngũgĩ in this chapter are the collusive actions of missionaries/churchmen in the projects of colonialism and neo-colonialism. It is noted that Ngũgĩ lifts the veil on the role played by religious men in the oppression and exploitation of the masses. These novels highlight the brainwashing strategy that facilitates domination.

As a committed writer, Ngũgĩ, analyses all the forces that have variously affected the humanity of people. However, he calls for awareness from the oppressed to act. In his will to restore truth and justice, and regenerate peace and justice in the society, he resorts to the Bible to convey messages. In addition to the denunciatory aspects, biblical elements are used to provide a thorough understanding of realities. They represent literary devices through which Ngũgĩ depicts key issues such as the impoverishment of the peasantry class and the excessive exploitation of the workers. We have also identified that biblical elements are well constructed to give a panoramic view of the evolution of relations in society. This means that the style is significant to the facts presented. If only each stratum of the society could listen to the voice of the writer whose writing is born from commitment, African nations would emerge in the globalizing process.

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